



The Pan-German League at the End of the 19th Century¹

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Over the course of the 19th century, a feeling of national unity began to gradually develop within Germany. The real triumph of the German nation was the successful Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, which subsequently, thanks to Prussian Minister President Otto von Bismarck, led to the unification of the German Empire on 18 January 1871.¹ For the vast majority of Germans, the establishment of the Empire was a deeply emotional issue. The experience and feeling of pride of a whole generation set the foundations for a strong modern German nationalism which over the course of subsequent years continued to develop dynamically. Despite the euphoria, here and there voices were heard criticising Bismarck's little-Germany unification concept; the new situation was not enough for certain nationalist groups. They imagined a much more ambitious process for unifying all Germans (e.g. including those in the Habsburg Monarchy, but often also those who would not actually consider themselves German) within one state, i.e. the realisation of a so-called Greater Germany solution. Later on, there were even some who would be dissatisfied even with that. As such, the aggressive ideology of Pan-Germanism was slowly born, finding an institutional form in the later Pan-German League (*Alldeutscher Verband*).

The objective of this study is not to give a definition of the Pan-Germanism term, nor to ascertain the causes or reasons that this phenomenon is closely linked to the history of Germany and the German nation.² The task of this paper is to give an overview of the development of the Pan-German League from the beginnings of the organisation until the end of Ernst Hasse's presidency of the league in 1908. The actions of the Pan-German League have been neglected by Czech or Czechoslovak historians. They usually look at the imperialist policy of the German Empire, and where they examine tendencies of expansionism or aggression, they only look at such issues amongst government representatives of the German Empire. Jiří Kořalka was an exception amongst Czech or Czechoslovak historians, having looked at the

1 The German Empire (*Deutsches Reich*) comprised 26 original states (4 kingdoms, 6 grand duchies, 5 duchies, 7 principalities, 3 free Hanseatic cities, and Alsace-Lorraine, an imperial territory captured from France).

2 Sandra Štollová has written an excellent paper on this topic for the Czech reader in her thesis, which has unfortunately not yet been published. See S. ŠTOLLOVÁ, *Pangermanismus: Proměna myšlenkového směru v oficiální ideologii*, Master thesis, Plzeň 2014.



Pan-German League and the Pan-German movement in a number of his studies.³ On the other hand, there are a wide range of foreign publications dedicated to Pan-Germanism and the Pan-German League, although most of these were published some time ago.⁴ Of the more recent studies, one should mention Michael Peters' scholarly monograph, *Der Alldeutsche Verband am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges (1908–1914)*,⁵ and German historian Rainer Hering's work, *Konstruierte Nation. Der Alldeutsche Verband, 1890 bis 1939*.⁶

To conclude the introduction, the Czech term *pangermanismus* (Ger: *Pangermanismus*) should be clarified, as it is often equated in Czech literature with the term *všenemectví* (Ger: *Alldeutschtum*). *Pangermanismus* can be understood as a movement which strives to “unify all nations with German ancestry or speaking Germanic languages [i.e. not just Germans, but also, e.g. the English, Dutch, Flemish, Scandinavian nations, etc.] within one state”,⁷ whereas *Alldeutschtum* is an “endeavour to unify all Germans, i.e. including those living in non-German states”.⁸ This implies that *Alldeutschtum* is often incorrectly used in place of *Pangermanismus* and vice-versa. In contrast, French, German and other non-German literature perceive the term *Pangermanismus* in a narrower sense and equate it with *Alldeutschtum*. For this reason, *Alldeutscher Verband* is translated as the *Pan-German League* and *Union pangermaniste* or *pangermanique* in English and French.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE PAN-GERMAN MOVEMENT

The Pan-German movement is seen in the final quarter of the 19th century not just in Germany, but also in Austria-Hungary. Both these movements were connected to a certain extent for a particular period of their operation and existence. The Pan-German movement was established gradually in the Habsburg monarchy in connection with growing nationalism and set itself up as a kind of counterbalance to the strong emancipation endeavours of the monarchy's other nations, in particular Czechs and Hungarians. To begin with, however, the activity of Austrian Germans cannot be per-

3 In particular, J. KOŘALKA, *Všeněmecký svaz a česká otázka koncem 19. století*, Praha 1963; J. KOŘALKA, *Georg Ritter von Schönerer und die alldeutsche Bewegung in den böhmischen Ländern*, in: H. H. HAHN, *Hundert Jahre sudetendeutsche Geschichte: Eine völkische Bewegung in drei Staaten*, Frankfurt am Main 2007, pp. 61–90.

4 O. BONHARD, *Geschichte des Alldeutschen Verbandes*, Leipzig/Berlin 1920; M. S. WERTHEIMER, *The Pan-German League: 1890–1914*, New York 1924; L. WERNER, *Der Alldeutsche Verband 1890–1918*, Berlin 1935; A. KRUCK, *Geschichte des Alldeutschen Verbandes 1890–1939*, Wiesbaden 1954; R. CHICKERING, *We Men Who Feel Most German: A Cultural Study of the Pan-German League 1886–1914*, Boston 1984.

5 M. PETERS, *Der Alldeutsche Verband am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges (1908–1914): Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des völkischen Nationalismus im spätwilhelminischen Deutschland*, Frankfurt am Main 1996.

6 R. HERING, *Konstruierte Nation: Der Alldeutsche Verband, 1890 bis 1939*, Hamburg 2003.

7 O. KREJČÍ, *Geopolitika středoevropského prostoru: Pohled z Prahy a Bratislavy*, Praha 2009, p. 92.

8 *Ibidem*, pp. 91–92.



ceived as exclusively an expression of German nationalism, but rather an endeavour to maintain the privileged status of Germans within the monarchy and its “German mission”. For this reason, the establishment of the German Empire is no less important for Austrian Germans. Schools of thought emerged which advocated stronger ties with Germany.

At a period of economic crisis during the 1870s, a radical grouping of German nationalists formed around Deputy of the Reichsrat, Georg von Schönerer (1842–1921), who further did not hide his admiration for Prussia and the German Empire. Schönerer’s endeavours led to the founding of the *Deutscher Klub* in Vienna in 1880, whose activities brought forth a large number of other German nationalist organisations within Austria-Hungary. Over time, a group of people formed around Schönerer, such as Viktor Adler (1852–1918), Engelbert Pernerstorfer (1850–1918), Heinrich Friedjung (1851–1920) and others, who published the so-called Linz Programme in magazine, *Deutsche Worte*, on 1 September 1882.⁹ It was based on fairly radical for the time social and democratic demands such as universal suffrage, the establishment of German as the official language, and a deeper alliance with Germany in the form of a customs union (and later also its enshrinement in the constitution). It also aimed to transform dualism into a mere personal union of Austria and Hungary (the peripheral Slavic regions of Galicia, Bukovina and Dalmatia, which were formerly a part of Cisleithania, were to be linked to Cisleithania through the sovereign). The outcome was meant to be the assurance of German supremacy in “Little Austria”, which could then become a “second German state”.¹⁰ While many of the instigators of the Linz Programme held socially critical opinions and over time moved towards either the social democratic or Christian democratic movement, Georg von Schönerer became a radical nationalist and anti-Semite. He became a true pan-German, pursuing Austria’s attachment to Germany. He was not very successful in this extreme agenda, however. He encountered quite a strong loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty within Austria, and not even his anti-clerical campaign, *Away from Rome! (Los von Rom)*, whose aim was to bring Germans in the monarchy closer to Protestant Prussia, did particularly well.¹¹ Despite this fact, however, Schönerer did not cease his activities. He focused himself instead on co-operation with the Pan-German movement in Germany.

The most important organisation in the Bohemian and Austrian lands in terms of later developments was the German Schools’ Association (*Deutscher Schulverein*). This was founded in Vienna in 1880 on the initiative of Engelbert Pernerstorfer. Viktor Adler was also one of the few members at the top of its management. The task of the German Schools’ Association was to establish and support German schools within those regions of the Habsburg monarchy where the conditions were not there for

9 E. PHILIPPOFF (ed.), *Die Doppelmonarchie Österreich-Ungarn. Ein politisches Lesebuch (1867–1918) = L’Autriche-Hongrie: Politique et culture a travers les textes (1867–1918)*, Ville-neuve-d’Ascq 2002, pp. 133–134.

10 An overview of the Linz Programme demands is given in D. GAWRECKI, *Počátky extrémního německého nacionalismu. Schönerer a rakouské Slezsko*, in: *Slezský sborník*, Vol. 68, 1970, p. 139; KOŘALKA, *Georg Ritter*, pp. 67–68.

11 J. KŘEN, *Dvě století střední Evropy*, Praha 2005, pp. 278–279.

the maintenance of such schools using state funds. The organisation also focused on promoting German education, aiming to ensure that Czech, South Slavic and Italian children visited exclusively German schools. In this regard, they often put pressure on employees in the workshops and factories of German entrepreneurs.¹² Along with many other contemporary organisations, the German Schools' Association was thus particularly focused on maintaining and boosting the current status of Austro-Hungarian Germans within the Habsburg monarchy. It is thus no surprise that this "struggle" for the privileged status of one nation did not pass without a number of expressions of radicalism. Notwithstanding, the German Schools' Association was able to bring together a wide circle of sympathisers. The organisation underwent its greatest expansion in the first decade of its existence in Austria. Just over the course of 1880, its membership numbers exceeded 3,000, reaching 22,000 in 1881. By 1887, membership had reached 120,000.¹³

The activities of the German Schools' Association,¹⁴ notwithstanding its activities within the Habsburg monarchy, had one more important effect. Not long after it was established in Austria, the activities of the organisation grew beyond the borders of the state it was founded in. Collections for funds to support the association's activities were also organised in various parts of Germany. In this way, branches of Austria's German Schools' Association began to form in southern German cities such as Freiburg, Konstanz, Wiesbaden and Mainz, and also in Berlin, Kiel and other cities, doing so unofficially since the law in the Habsburg Monarchy banned Austro-Hungarian associations from setting up branches abroad. As such, the Berlin branch took the initiative to arrange organisational independence, setting up the General German Schools' Association (*Allgemeiner Deutscher Schulverein*) within the territory of Germany in 1881.¹⁵ Naturally, management of the association in Vienna anticipated that the association in Germany would merely be independent on paper due to the law and that its programme and all activities would be managed from headquarters in Vienna.¹⁶ The General German Schools' Association, however, did not live up to these expectations. Over the course of just a few months, the Berlin headquarters secured co-operation with southern German branches which had originally wanted to work closely with the Vienna headquarters. As such, an independent organisation formed in Germany which nevertheless shared similar objectives to the Austrian one: above all to strengthen Germanness and broaden German cultural influence.

12 KOŘALKA, *Všeněmecký svaz*, p. 16.

13 Ibidem.

14 For more on the activities of the German Schools' Association, see R. ZAORAL, *České a německé školské spolky v Čechách na konci 19. století*, in: *Acta Universitatis Palackianae Olomucensis. Facultas philosophica. Historica* 26. Sborník prací historických XIV, 1994, pp. 33–41.

15 P. WALKENHORST, *Nation — Volk — Rasse: Radikaler Nationalismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich 1890–1914*, Göttingen 2007, p. 64.

16 The Austrian association also expected that the General German Schools' Association would send all financial surpluses to Vienna. KOŘALKA, *Všeněmecký svaz*, p. 19.



ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PAN-GERMAN LEAGUE IN GERMANY

Following the unification of the German Empire, it took some time before nationalists were able to recover their strength and begin to consider what else Germany could gain in the world. That doesn't mean, however, that German society prior to this was indifferent to the expansionist and colonial policies of European powers. Over the course of the 19th century there were a number of thinkers, scientists, traders, etc., who followed the acts of their European neighbours with interest and strived not to be left behind. A number of travellers, traders and missionaries undertook overseas expeditions at a time when Germany was still a mere geographic term, in which they tried, with some success, to develop mutual relations and trade.¹⁷ Their endeavours lacked support from the state, however, and this obstacle was only overcome with the unification of Germany in 1871.

This all suggests that German nationalists were mostly interested in overseas territories, setting up colonies and spreading German influence throughout the world, rather than in integrating Germans in Central Europe. Proof of this is the establishment of the Pan-German League in Germany which was founded as an immediate consequence of conflict between the government and nationalists over colonialism, as well as a change in focus of the General German Schools' Association mentioned above, which following its independence turned its attention away from nationalist conflicts within the Habsburg Monarchy to focus mainly on supporting, protecting and spreading German influence and German education throughout the world. The General German Schools' Association turnaround was also reflected in its later change of name to the Association for Germanness Abroad (*Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland*) in 1908.¹⁸

A number of associations which were formed during the 1890s also demonstrated interest in overseas expansion. The first of these was the German Colonial Association (*Deutscher Kolonialverein*) founded in 1882, followed by the Society for German Colonisation (*Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation*) in 1884 founded by young colonial activist and traveller, Carl Peters (1856–1918). His society was founded with a clear objective: to acquire colonies in East Africa. In contrast to the German Colonial Association, Peters' Society for German Colonisation was more single-minded and aggressive. Over the course of subsequent years, there were negotiations on merging these two organisations, though agreement was not reached until 1887 when the two societies became the German Colonial Society (*Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft*).¹⁹ The reason for merging the two societies was the more successful approach of the Society for German Colonisation, and Carl Peters above all, who managed to undertake essential steps for the later declaration of German East Africa. It was no doubt Peters who was largely responsible for the acquisition of this German colony. The successes achieved through Peters' activities caught the attention not just of German nationalists, but also major trading companies. With the support received, he was able to

17 For more, see A. SKŘIVAN — P. KŘIVSKÝ, *Opožděná expanse: Koloniální výboj Německa a Itálie v letech 1870–1918*, Praha 1977, pp. 15–25.

18 H. C. MEYER, *Mittleuropa in German Thought and Action, 1815–1945*, The Hague 1955, pp. 50–51.

19 SKŘIVAN — KŘIVSKÝ, pp. 40–41.



assemble the so-called First General German Congress in Berlin in 1886,²⁰ to which it seems all nationalist-focused organisations and associations from Germany and abroad sent representatives. German colonial policy was discussed at the congress, as well as matters which one might term Pan-German (the need to spread German culture, language, etc.).²¹ The Congress resulted in the founding of General German League to Support Overseas German National Interests (*Allgemeiner Deutscher Verband zur Förderung überseeischer deutsch-nationaler Interessen*), which was to serve as an umbrella organisation for German colonial and national associations already operating.²² For its first few years, however, this grouping essentially did not work, mainly because each of the original interest groups had a difference perspective on colonial policy. Furthermore, Peters as the central figure of the whole project, was at the time busy in East Africa and was unable to devote his time to the role of head of the association.

The ball got rolling again after the conclusion of the so-called Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty between Great Britain and Germany in July 1890.²³ On the basis of this international agreement, Germany acquired the strategically important island of Heligoland²⁴ in the North Sea not far from the German coastline, and the so-called Caprivi Strip²⁵ in southwest Africa, and the border between Britain's Gold Coast and the German colony of Togoland was definitively determined. In exchange, Germany renounced its entitlement to the Sultanate of Zanzibar and the Sultanate of Witu-land, as well as entitlements in Uganda and the Upper Nile region.²⁶ The purpose of the treaty for Germany was to ensure the security of its newly constructed Kiel Canal and improve mutual relations with Britain.²⁷

20 The full title, the First General German Congress to Support Overseas Interests (*Erste allgemeine deutsche Kongreß zur Förderung überseeischer Interessen*), took place from 13 to 16 September 1886.

21 ŠTOLLOVÁ, pp. 66–67.

22 R. HERING, *Konstruierte Nation: Der Alldeutsche Verband, 1890 bis 1939*, Hamburg 2003, pp. 111–112.

23 See cf. A. BIRKEN, *Der Helgoland-Sansibar-Vertrag von 1890*, in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichts- und Geographie-Unterricht*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1974, pp. 194–204; D. GILLARD, *Salisbury's African Policy and the Heligoland Offer of 1890*, in: *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 75, No. 297, 1960, pp. 631–653; J. SCHUSTER, *Britsko-německé „koloniální líbánky“: Helgolandská smlouva*, Bachelor thesis, Praha 2013.

24 The island's position was the perfect location from which the German coast could be inspected, and it could provide refuge if needed for the German navy.

25 This was a strip roughly 450 km long and 50 km wide which was connected to the territory of German East Africa, stretching east. Theoretically, it would allow Germany access to the Zambezi River, but in reality this was almost impossible because it was mostly impenetrable swampland.

26 To the problems of the Upper Nile and the British Policy see J. VALKOUN, *The British-French Struggle for the Upper Nile*, in: *Prague Papers on the History of International Relations*, 2009, p. 235; J. VALKOUN, *Fašodská krize: Vyvrcholení britsko-francouzského soupeření v oblasti horního Nilu*, in: *Historický obzor*, Vol. 21, No. 7/8, 2010, pp. 146–147.

27 For more on the context of German Chancellor Leo von Caprivi's foreign policy, see F. STELLNER, *Capriviho zahraniční politika v letech 1890–1892*, in: *Historický obzor*, Vol. 6, No. 9/10, 1995, pp. 203–210.



While in Britain the public accepted the treaty with certain reservations, in Germany it was seen in a very negative light. Singled out for criticism were concessions to Britain in Germany's colonial policy. Members of the associations mentioned and other proponents of an aggressive colonial policy termed the treaty literally a "betrayal" of the German nation after it was published and launched a campaign to for the Reichstag to annul the treaty. The campaign culminated in the publication of an article entitled "Germany, Wake Up!" (*Deutschland wach auf!*) in the major newspapers *Kölnische* and *Frankfurter Zeitung*. This article represented a kind of proclamation to the German nation openly calling for the mobilisation of nationalist forces and called forcefully for Germans as a "master race" (*Herrenvolk*) to have a greater share in global governance: "Who can prevent a nation of fifty million, the best of whom are in war service, which spends over half a billion on war each year; who can prevent such a nation from tearing up this treaty which clearly serves only to cheat the next generation out of its inherited share of the planet?! [...] We are ready upon the call of our Emperor to join the ranks and in silence and obediently be lead to strike against the enemy fire, for which, however, we may ask a price worthy of that sacrifice, and that price is affiliation to the master nation, which takes its share of the world and does not endeavour to acquire it through the grace and benevolence of some other nation. Germany, wake up!"²⁸

The response to this declaration was not as large as its authors anticipated, and in the end the government's position did not change. Nevertheless, the outcry which the government's measures caused had a direct impact on the still disunited colonial and nationalist associations. The idea of establishing a new, firmly organised nationalist organisation which would better defend the interests of proponents of colonialism if needed, and which would be able to put greater efforts into promoting a decisive colonial policy, came to the fore. A then young Alfred Hugenberg (1865–1951)²⁹ promoted this idea, exploiting the situation after publication of the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty, and set about organising a new association. His successful initiative means he was later termed the "true father of the Pan-German League".³⁰ On Hugenberg's invitation, a meeting of supporters of his ideas took place on 28 September 1890. The group around Hugenberg managed to achieve co-operation with the previously mentioned and as yet not particularly active General German League to Support Overseas German National Interests, and also got Carl Peters to support their idea. The constitutive assembly of the new organisation took place on 9 April 1891 in Berlin. The name of the new organisation was shortened to the General German League (*Allgemeiner Deutscher Verband*).³¹ Karl

28 M. PETERS, *Der Alldeutsche Verband am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges (1908–1914): Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des völkischen Nationalismus im spätwilhelminischen Deutschland*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, p. 15; KOŘALKA, *Všeránecký svaz*, p. 25; for the full text, see BONHARD, pp. 233–237.

29 Alfred Hugenberg was later president of the German National People's Party during the Weimar Republic (*Deutschnationale Volkspartei*) and Minister for Economics, Agriculture and Food in Hitler's cabinet from 30 January 1933 until his resignation on 29 June of the same year.

30 BONHARD, p. 3.

31 This was the direct predecessor of the Pan-German League. E. HARTWIG, *Alldeutscher Verband (ADV) 1891–1939*, in: D. FRICKE et al., *Lexikon zur Parteiengeschichte: Die bürgerli-*



von der Heydt, a banker from Elberfeld became its head.³² From its beginning, the organisation promoted itself as a pressure group of German “patriots” and defenders of broadly conceived “national interests”. A significant portion of their activities were focused on criticising the imperial government’s foreign, and also domestic, policies. The league’s core ideology was a conviction of the German nation’s exclusive mission, right and duty to build a strong Central European and colonial power.³³ To this end, it pursued an aggressive and confident expansionist policy, demanded the broadening of its colonial domination in the world, and promoted the building of a strong navy and other measures which were meant to secure the German Empire a place amongst the great powers of the world. During the first years of its existence, the league’s programme managed to attract a large number of important figures. The league’s top management, for example, included people such as Wilhelm von Kardoff-Wabnitz, Conservative party leader, Johannes Wislicenus, rector at Leipzig University, and Alexander Lucas, director of the German East Africa Company.³⁴ Some of the members of the Reichstag and Bundesrat featured in the league’s other bodies. Representatives of heavy industry also held influential positions within the league, including, for example, Emil Kirdorf, President of the Rhenish-Westphalian Coal Syndicate,³⁵ Theodor Reismann-Grone, later Secretary General of the Mining Association in Dortmund³⁶ and publisher of *Rheinisch-Westfälischen Zeitung*, and finally Alfred Hugenberg himself, who later became Chairman of the Board of Krupp Steel.³⁷ This is no surprise, because as the league was pursuing an expansionist policy and the arming of the navy, its activities were clearly in the interests of representatives of industry.

The first months of the General German League were marked by dramatic growth. At the end of June 1891, the league had around 2,000 members, while by May of the following year it already had 21,000 members.³⁸ The General German League’s sphere of influence soon went beyond Germany’s borders, and it shortly had members operating in over a hundred places abroad. Within Germany, the league had branches de facto in all large towns and cities. Soon, however, there was a steep fall in the league’s activities related to its rapid growth. It transpired that the fairly small membership contributions³⁹ were not enough to cover the league’s needs. They had originally assumed a large base organisation, but its growth exceeded its own capabilities. Furthermore, the organisation’s president Karl von der Heydt did not pay

chen und Kleinbürgerlichen Parteien und Verbände in Deutschland (1789–1945), Vol. 1, Leipzig 1983, pp. 15–16.

32 He held the role from 9 April 1891 to 5 July 1893.

33 The specific priorities and objectives of the league are analysed in D. S. JORDAN, *The Ways of Pangermany*, in: *The Scientific Monthly*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1917, pp. 29–30.

34 G. ELEY, *Reshaping the German Right: Radical Nationalism and Political Change after Bismarck*, Ann Arbor 1991, p. 49.

35 *Rheinisch-Westfälisches Kohlen-Syndikat*.

36 *Verein für die bergbaulichen Interessen im Oberbergamtsbezirk Dortmund*.

37 KOŘALKA, *Všerámský svaz*, p. 26.

38 HERING, p. 115.

39 The annual fee was initially determined as 1 mark, then 2 marks from 1899, and at least 5 marks from 1916.



sufficient attention to organising the league. Hugenberg was forced to take control of the situation again, his group managing to undertake a comprehensive reorganisation of the league in July 1893.⁴⁰ On 5 July, Leipzig's Professor of Statistics, Ernst Hasse (1846–1908)⁴¹ became its new President. Its previously irregularly issued magazine⁴² was transformed into the regular weekly periodical *Alldeutsche Blätter*. The complete reorganisation culminated in a change in the league's name to the Pan-German League (*Alldeutscher Verband*) on 1 July 1894.⁴³

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PAN-GERMAN LEAGUE UNDER ERNST HASSE'S MANAGEMENT

Under Ernst Hasse's management, the Pan-German League became a strongly consolidated organisation. The league's activities focused on promoting its plans and vision, which teetered somewhere between *Alldeutschtum* and *Pangermanismus*. The league spread its ideas through speech and written form. Besides its periodical *Alldeutsche Blätter*, the league published a number of other papers, brochures, pamphlets, leaflets etc. in which it defended its perspective in terms of "the end justifies the means". The indirect effect of spreading its ideas across its wider membership base cannot be underestimated either. Its membership included university professors, teachers, the clergy, doctors, officials and officers for the most part and also less important traders and entrepreneurs.⁴⁴ A particularly large proportion of the Pan-German League's membership was made up of university professors, some of whom included major historians such as Karl Lamprecht, Georg von Below, Otto Hoetzsch and sociologist Max Weber. In time, the proportion of newspaper and magazine editors and publishers also increased. This suggests that many Pan-German League members and functionaries had a higher social status and were able to influence public opinion within German society from their positions. In this way, the Pan-German ideology could spread amongst the wider social classes of the German population. Helping the Pan-German League's renown was the fact that it never became a mass organisation, and to outward appearances seemed to be an association of the German elite.

The Pan-German League's interests and priorities underwent significant re-evaluation under Ernst Hasse's presidency. The Pan-Germans' attention turned from overseas and colonial policies to an expansionist strategy within Europe. Overseas colonialism became a secondary priority for the Pan-Germans.⁴⁵ This certainly did not mean, however, that the Pan-German League would neglect its overseas interests.

⁴⁰ KOŘALKA, *Všeněmecký svaz*, p. 26.

⁴¹ Key biographical information is given in G. KOLDITZ, *Hasse, Ernst Traugott Friedrich*, in: *Sächsische Biografie* [online], [http://saebi.isgv.de/biografie/Ernst_Hasse_\(1846-1908\)](http://saebi.isgv.de/biografie/Ernst_Hasse_(1846-1908)), [cit. 2015-12-15].

⁴² *Mitteilungen des Allgemeinen Deutschen Vereines*.

⁴³ HARTWIG, p. 18.

⁴⁴ The percentage representation of different professions is given in PETERS, pp. 23–24.

⁴⁵ K. THÖRNER, „Der ganze Südosten ist unser Hinterland“: *Deutsche Südosteuropapläne von 1840 bis 1945*, Freiburg 2008, p. 181.



It continued to support colonial associations and had links with other nationalist organisations. It co-operated closely, for example, with the General German Schools' Association,⁴⁶ and was closely linked to the German Navy League (*Deutscher Flottenverein*).⁴⁷ The Pan-German League's change in priorities, however, was expressed in the building of mutual relations with German nationalist associations in Central Europe. An example of this is the contacts it developed with German associations within the Habsburg Monarchy, in particular in the Bohemian Lands. Some of the Pan-German League's first confidants within Austria-Hungary included Josef Taschek (1857–1939), president of the *Deutscher Böhmerwaldbund* association in České Budějovice (Budweis), and Josef Wenzel Titta (1863–1923), later President of the so-called *Deutscher Volksrat in Böhmen*.⁴⁸ Ernst Hasse himself was welcomed to the Bohemian and Austrian lands with his close associates at the end of 1896. Together, they visited German nationalist associations in Prague, Liberec (Reichenberg), Litoměřice (Leitmeritz) and Most (Brüx), and a number of other organisations in the Austrian lands. During their journey across the monarchy, they endeavoured to establish links between local nationalist associations and the Pan-German League. Their attempts met with success.⁴⁹ The leaders of these organisations, of which the Union of Germans in Bohemia (*Bund der Deutschen in Böhmen*) would later come to prominence, provided the Pan-German League with information on nationality statistics within the Habsburg Monarchy. The League then used this information for its scaremongering in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* paper, thus sowing the seeds of German hatred towards other nationalities in Austria-Hungary and Germany. This practice was also meant to demonstrate the solidarity of all Germans against the “danger” from the “enemy of the German nation”.

This tendency for hatred towards other nations, however, is notable prior to this. In 1894, Ernst Hasse wrote an article published in *Alldeutsche Blätter*, in which he refused to countenance the very possibility of autonomy for, or even the separate national existence of Czechs and Slovenians. He wrote: “Looking at the map of nations shoes that this relationship is geographically unavoidable. The German nation can never give up Bohemia or Moravia, nor its access to the Adriatic Sea. When existential issues are at stake, in the light of cultural history there can be no doubt that Czechs and Slovenians must be subservient to the German nation.”⁵⁰ In subsequent years, Pan-German campaigns escalated further. In 1895, an anonymous brochure was published in Berlin

46 From 1908 the Association for Germanness Abroad (*Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland*).

47 For more on the German Navy League, see G. ELEY, *Reshaping the Right: Radical Nationalism and the German Navy League, 1898–1908*, in: *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1978, pp. 327–354.

48 K. KAISEROVÁ, *Všeněmecký svaz a jeho působení v příhraničních oblastech českých zemí*, in: H. AMBROŽOVÁ — T. DVORÁK — B. CHOCHOLÁČ et al. (Eds.), *Historik na Moravě: Profeso-ru Jiřímu Malířovi, předsedovi Matice moravské a vedoucímu Historického ústavu FF MU, věnují jeho kolegové, přátelé a žáci k šedesátinám*, Brno 2002, p. 484.

49 The links between the Pan-German League and German nationalist associations in the Bohemian Lands is clearly illustrated by Jiří Kořalka in his cited work, *Všeněmecký svaz a česká otázka koncem 19. století*.

50 KOŘALKA, *Všeněmecký svaz*, pp. 35–36.



entitled *Germany Triumphant (Germania triumphans)*, which predicted the events of 1900–1915. The author anticipated a war between Germany and Great Britain and Russia in which Germany would be victorious along with Austria-Hungary. Germany would then acquire huge amounts of territory in Poland, the Baltic and southern Russia as far as the Volga and Don rivers, while Austria would govern the Balkan states, together creating a federal state with Austria in the leading role. Not only did the author assume the gradual Germanisation of the Slavic population of the expanded Habsburg Monarchy, but above all the forced Germanisation of the newly acquired territories of the German Empire. Furthermore, Germany wanted to secure the right to deport the Slavic population of annexed areas. The abandoned land would then be repopulated by emigrants returning from America and overseas.⁵¹

Soon a review of this document appeared in *Alldeutsche Blätter* written by the president of the Pan-German League himself. Hasse gave quite a positive assessment of the brochure's content, agreeing with the expulsion (*Vertreibung*)⁵² of much of the non-German nations in the territories confiscated, though one fact escaped him. He couldn't understand why the new Greater Germany would leave Austria as a separate state. A reconsideration of this issue led to another tract published that same year entitled *Greater Germany and Central Europe around 1950 (Großdeutschland und Mitteleuropa um das Jahr 1950)*.⁵³ This gave over a lot of space to the future of the Habsburg Monarchy. In contrast to the prior brochure, the author anticipated the gradual merging of Austria-Hungary and Germany into one unit of state. This new Greater Germany would naturally involve systematic Germanisation and denial of the principal of equality of nations. The brochure stressed the difference between mere nationals (*Staatsangehörige*) and full German citizens (*volldeutsche Bürger*), who would be able to enjoy active and passive suffrage, in contrast to other groups.⁵⁴

Over subsequent years, a large number of similar *Pangermanismus* and *Alldeutschtum* tracts were published. They all had a similar content. Their difference was only in how far the writer dared to go. It is hard to estimate to what extent the spreading of these publications influenced public opinion in wider German society, or the policies of the central government. What is certain is that these theoretical reflections on the future of the German nation became ever more radical. In addition, criticism of the central government also built up further. The organisation's behaviour began to resemble the behaviour of *enfants terribles*. At the beginning of the new century, however, the organisation's nature changed. In 1908 the hitherto President of the organisation, Ernst Hasse, died and was replaced as head of the Pan-German League by Heinrich Claß (1868–1954).⁵⁵ Under Claß's management, the league entered a new phase of its existence. A narrower elite got into the league's top management,

51 Ibidem, p. 57.

52 This is probably the first use of this term with this meaning.

53 The author of this tract was none other than the league's President Ernst Hasse. THÖRNER, p. 184.

54 The brochure *Großdeutschland und Mitteleuropa um das Jahr 1950* is looked at in detail in KOŘALKA, *Všeněmecký svaz*, pp. 58–60.

55 He held the role president of the Pan-German League for a whole 31 years (from 9 February 1908 to 13 March 1939).

the internal operations were made stricter and strictly military principles were applied in decision-making. From the outside, the league did not act particularly radically; on the contrary it stayed more out of sight and influenced events from behind the scenes. Many elite members of the league held important positions in the army, state authorities, high political circles, economic and industrial associations, the media, etc. The network of Pan-German League members was able to pursue the league's interests in quite an effective manner, and to do so quite unobtrusively without the need for public demonstrations.⁵⁶



THE PAN-GERMAN LEAGUE AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY

ABSTRACT

The Pan-German League was established as a pressure group of German nationalists and “defenders of national interests” in the consequence of the release of the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty in 1890. Its founder and an important member was Alfred Hugenberg, who managed to gain support and cooperation of existing nationalist and colonial societies in Germany. The Pan-German League (*Alldeutscher Verband*) was established owing to the Hugenberg's activity in 1891. Although, the colonial policy of Germany was its first primary issue, its interest gradually started to shift towards the Central Europe. The membership of the League was comprised not only of university professors, teachers, clergymen, doctors of medicine, office workers or army officers, but also of important politicians or industrialists. The activity of the League was concentrated primarily on the strengthening of German nationalist ideas in the internal politics of German Empire and the support of the spreading of German cultural influence abroad. The league's core ideology was a conviction of the German nation's exclusive mission, right and duty to build a strong Central European and colonial power. To this end, it pursued an aggressive and confident expansionist policy, demanded the broadening of its colonial domination in the world, and promoted the building of a strong navy and other measures which were meant to secure the German Empire a place amongst the great powers of the world.

KEYWORDS

Pan-German League; Pan-Germanism; Political Movements; German Empire; Nationalism

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⁵⁶ ŠTOLLOVÁ, p. 76.